

# THE EVOLVING DOMESTIC FORUM FOR NATIONAL SECURITY DEBATES

by

DR. ANTHONY L. WERMUTH

## THE AQUARIAN LANDSCAPE



Not too many decades ago, decisionmaking on matters of national security could be accomplished, so to speak, in a forum not much larger than a breadbox. Today, the elements and actors influencing any nation's security policy are seen to be legion. Having recourse to the rule of parsimony, I speak here mainly of policymaking in the domestic context, in both abstract and concrete terms. The primary dynamic pervading this article is consideration of change, making the environment for national security planners more difficult, complex, and circumscribed. This evolving context is, of course, no secret to the planners themselves; indeed, few institutions have been so energetic as the military institutions in adjusting many procedures to the so-called Age of Aquarius.

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Obviously, a host of factors are relevant, even crucial, to this environment. Changing factors in the international context will exercise tremendous influence; after all, the primary thrust of national security policy is external and outward, intended to protect this society against harm from foreign sources. Some developments in the international context contain what are clearly seeds of potential future conflict, such as the competition over the dwindling fossil fuels in the earth's crust; the looming conflicts over exploitation of resources in the oceans and seabeds; the anomalous role of multinational corporations; the potential tensions between the have and have-not nations; the pressures building up from expanding populations; the uncertainties contingent upon monetary and fiscal interchange; not to mention the realities of nuclear arsenals, space satellites, intercontinental missiles—all are factors which becloud the future relations among nations.

To raise a single specific question, for example—what effects on America's world status will emerge from relinquishment of American control over the Panama Canal? It is probably too early even to conjecture.

I should like, however, to concentrate more on the domestic forum than the foreign or international. But even the domestic forum is too much to handle in a brief span, for the context of domestic political change alone is a formidable challenge. For example, the War Powers Resolution, the 60-day limit on the President's authority to commit US forces overseas without Congressional endorsement, may have a currently imponderable but profound future effect on a number of domestic military affairs, such as on the Reserve and National Guard system. The domestic economic context, too, is certainly formidable, as we wrestle with the largest-ever

Report Documentation Page				Form Approved OMB No. 0704-0188	
Public reporting burden for the collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to Washington Headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports, 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington VA 22202-4302. Respondents should be aware that notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person shall be subject to a penalty for failing to comply with a collection of information if it does not display a currently valid OMB control number.					
1. REPORT DATE <b>1974</b>		2. REPORT TYPE		3. DATES COVERED <b>00-00-1974 to 00-00-1974</b>	
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE <b>The Evolving Domestic Forum for National Security Debates</b>				5a. CONTRACT NUMBER	
				5b. GRANT NUMBER	
				5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER	
6. AUTHOR(S)				5d. PROJECT NUMBER	
				5e. TASK NUMBER	
				5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER	
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) <b>US Army War College ,ATTN: Parameters ,122 Forbes Avenue,Carlisle,PA,17013-5238</b>				8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER	
9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)				10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)	
				11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)	
12. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY STATEMENT <b>Approved for public release; distribution unlimited</b>					
13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES <b>Parameters. Vol. IV, No. 2, 1974. pp. 66-76</b>					
14. ABSTRACT					
15. SUBJECT TERMS					
16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT <b>Same as Report (SAR)</b>	18. NUMBER OF PAGES <b>11</b>	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON
a. REPORT <b>unclassified</b>	b. ABSTRACT <b>unclassified</b>	c. THIS PAGE <b>unclassified</b>			

peacetime military budget. In the remainder of this article, therefore, I should like to emphasize the probable impacts of change in American social and cultural contexts, which necessarily overlap the areas of politics, economics, foreign relations, and national security affairs.

At the outset, I shall propound a few deliberately provocative questions. Their relevance should emerge during the course of our discussion:

— In an age of mass media and mass opinion, are we more, or less, vulnerable to prevailing “wisdom” that is sometimes inaccurate and misleading?

— Can a community preserve its integrity if individual conscience is accorded a priority overriding all other considerations?

— Which value, achievement or equality, will contribute most to the realization of social cohesion in future society?

— If America must eventually fight a particular war, is it more desirable to fight it, if possible, on foreign soil, or to wait and fight it on American soil?

— Is the prevailing attitude of Americans really biased against the military, or is that a recurrent myth which certain writers keep telling us is so?

— Or Samuel Huntington’s question: “How can a liberal society provide for its military security when this requires the maintenance of professional military forces and institutions fundamentally at odds with liberalism?”<sup>1</sup>

These and many other questions suggest themselves as being invested with increased significance in the modern context of military affairs. Answers to these questions are, as usual in dynamic times, not clear.

#### MORE OR LESS FAMILIAR THEMES



Underlying my comments is one firm assumption: the military function remains important to American society—not only does the nation still need military forces, but also, when they must perform, it is of critical

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### CYCLICAL APPROVAL AND ALIENATION IS ONE PROBLEM WITH WHICH THE MILITARY HAS WRESTLED THROUGH THE AGES IN ALL SOCIETIES . . .

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importance that the function be performed well. It is essential that military expertise be fostered, developed, and maintained beforehand, over a long training period—despite indifference, misunderstanding, and alienation. As one of the Marine Corps slogans has it: “Nobody wants to fight, but somebody has to know how.”

Cyclical approval and alienation is one problem with which the military has wrestled through the ages in all societies, bespoken by the poets from Homer to Housman. Kipling’s lines have become perhaps over-familiar (but to the rising generation?):

Oh, it’s Tommy this and Tommy that  
And “Chuck ’im out, the brute.”  
But it’s “saviour of ’is country”  
When the guns begin to shoot.

In the wider context of international power dynamics, a certain American naivete has also recurred in the past; it is sometimes refreshing, sometimes exasperating, sometimes even dangerous. One recalls the incident of Secretary of State Henry L. Stimson breaking up the decoding section of the State Department on the grounds that “gentlemen do not read each other’s mail.”<sup>2</sup> Or one recalls the incident of Woodrow Wilson in the White House in 1915, holding up a copy of that day’s *Baltimore Sun*, livid with rage at an item which revealed that the Army General Staff was developing contingency plans for use in case of a war with Germany. Wilson furiously directed the Acting Secretary of War to investigate and, if he found the story to be true, to relieve every officer on the General Staff and transfer them out of Washington.<sup>3</sup> A difficult forum for military planners for, ironically, only two years later we *were* at war with Germany. To

what extent has that context of naivete changed?

### ONE TYPOLOGY OF CHANGE



In contemplating change, we may discern three types: fads, cycles, and long-term changes. All of them must be coped with, and they all affect the processes of developing national security policy.

Fads may be of relatively short duration, but may also be highly intense and almost irresistible while they last. The youth element of the ferment of the 1960's furnishes an example, although many an aspect was something more than a fad. We expanded schools and colleges furiously, but we were not sufficiently aware of many other aspects—such as the connections between explosion of the youth sector of the population and teenage unemployment, crime, drug abuse, and subcultures encapsulated from the rest of society. The tidal wave of additional young people in the 1960's provided the physical underpinnings for the youth movement and the emphasis on personal “liberation” as a transcendent value and it certainly played a role in opposition to the Vietnam War.

A second type of change is cyclical, producing recurrences of pressures which we have felt before, though perhaps in different forms or degrees. For example, the end of every war witnesses an ebbing tide of interest in military affairs and a rise in hedonistic, individualistic pursuits. The lines from Kipling suggest analogous situations to those in which American military establishments have found themselves before.

This cyclic recurrence, coupled with the emergence of fads, is related to the evocation of “prevailing wisdom,” the pervasive domination within a society of one among several contending explanations of major events. It is usually difficult to resist or to counter; although when reconsideration later sets in, we sometimes wonder how on earth we could have been swept along at the time.

American society does not ordinarily sustain passion very long. Harvard sociologist S. M. Lipset calculates that in America those movements that attain the level of obsessions, from Know-Nothingism to McCarthyism, generally have a life cycle of four to five years and then rather quickly fade. This phenomenon is related to General Marshall's assertion at the end of World War II that a democracy will not fight a long war.<sup>4</sup>

The third type of change sometimes is, but mostly is not, as dramatic or intense as fads and cycles. Some protracted revolutions are subtle and imponderable, but relentless nevertheless. This enduring type of secular change is like a series of peaks on a continuous wave of human progress, an extended movement whose destination lies far beyond any horizon that we can see. None of the most important themes in this wave were invented today—in the youth movement or in any other cultural area. They have been universally cited as common aspirations in all cultures and all societies—freedom from injustice, from want, from fear, and from servitude. They bear continuous witness to the myths, the rationalizations, and the shortfalls in social performance, and they advance the human condition by some degree. Their effects are more or less permanent.

Examples spring readily to the mind of anyone with a sense of history. I shall cite only one: the disappearance of the concept of the divine right of kings, and the triumph of the concept of the sovereignty of the people. As De Tocqueville observed, since the 11th Century the whole course of Western civilization has steadily moved in the direction of egalitarianism.

Although I have identified three types of change, there are really dozens occurring simultaneously, at different paces and in different directions. Nor should we neglect to observe that some aspects of society are changing very little, or not at all—for one example, the persistent tendency in all of us to see, or hear, not what is to be seen or heard, but what we want to perceive.

Such a classification system is relatively easy to set up, but it is much more difficult to recognize which category is appropriate for

labeling any particular change, and to assess the intensity and probable duration of a particular change. Is it a fad that will eventually blow away, never to return? Or is it like something we have seen before that left behind lessons we ought to recall? Or are we dealing here with some tenacious deviance from familiar processes—perhaps a new perspective or value shift that is not going to fade away, however much we might wish that it would?

#### MORE EXPENSIVE KNOWLEDGE, COORDINATION, AND TIME



Daniel Bell is one who steers a careful course between the utopians and the doomsayers.<sup>5</sup> Some look at the future with concern in terms of scarcity, in terms of *how much*, meaning the *amount* of foods and services that will be available. Bell insists that the critical question is not *amount*, but *relative costs*. Here, I take it, he means not accretion, but redistribution—the monetary, social, and psychic costs of redistribution. In the post-industrial society, three hitherto inexpensive factors will escalate sharply in costs: information, coordination, and time. Each of these factors will compound the policymaking process.

Information becomes more costly simply because of the escalating scale of information we need in every field. Knowledge is proliferating (doubling about every 15 years); but the more knowledge we develop, the more we need. Moreover, the information we need becomes increasingly technical, specialized, and complex; consequently, we need more intermediaries for explanation, translation, and synthesis. At the same time, we become more conscious of the finite limitations on the amount of information that any person, however brilliant, can absorb. For the security analyst and the strategist, as well as for every other specialist, this means increasing dependence upon teams whose members pool their knowledge—interdisciplinary teams, interagency teams, teams aware of the vital necessity for

incorporating multiple perspectives. The major security dilemmas are no longer susceptible to resolution primarily by the State Department, or a military department, or the Defense Department, or even the State-Defense team.

I am speaking here primarily of formally-organized knowledge. We need also to be aware of the more diverse sources of knowledge available outside formal structures today, especially to the young. The director of a French prep school observed recently that in the previous generation 75 percent of what students knew they had learned in school; but today, 75 percent of an adolescent's knowledge comes from outside the school. It is food for reflection that the average high school graduate today has already spent some 15,000 hours watching television, compared to 12,000 hours attending school.<sup>6</sup> What stereotypes of the military, for example, have coalesced in his mind out of that experience?

What Bell calls the costs of coordination are also rising sharply—not only monetary costs, but also costs in time and in social cohesion. Along with technology, perhaps the principal engine of change is education. As education permeates a society, more and more participants enter the political process. Educated people tend to be more discerning and less gullible about the political process, as well as more determined to exercise a role in governing themselves. One aspect is that interest groups splinter and multiply, representing fragments of political parties, consumer interests, ethnic minorities, industrial associations, organized labor, professional societies, religious denominations, even domestic and foreign policy issues. In sum, they raise more issues, assess issues more deeply, generate more mediation and bargaining, and require more contacts, more transportation, more communication. Some become essentially veto groups. More organization and more planning are demanded, and eventually more social control and regulation—else the society bogs down in chaos.

The principal proponents in the development of national security policy will be increasingly constrained by the necessity

to coordinate, directly or indirectly, with proliferating interest groups which develop political sophistication and political clout—not to neglect mention of their potentially valuable insights.

Bell's third area of rising costs is that of time. As society becomes more complex, individuals and agencies confront intensifying dilemmas over how to apportion their own time, how to establish priorities among various claimants on their time, and how to apportion more money out of rising incomes to hire more costly services in order to save their own time. A complex illustration might involve essential research by security agencies. Which is least expensive in time and money: the establishment of an in-house research and study group that includes all the essential disciplines, perspectives, and specialists, or contracting the problems to external agencies which are competently staffed? This is one specific problem, incidentally, that will nag future security-policy agencies indefinitely, as the costs of time, including the costs of in-house manpower time, continue to climb.

#### CORE PHILOSOPHY AND ITS CONTENDERS



The Vietnam War and the military have been catalyst-scapegoats, to some extent, for the unrest and discontents that have been running deep since long before a shooting conflict

erupted in Indo-China, as the traditional sources of value have been drying up and consequent decay has occurred in uniform beliefs. Weber and Durkheim felt that modern man would find solace only in allegiance to larger solidarities; they felt that the way to individual security lies in *collective* normalcy, in the maintenance of norms and binding customs. Social health, they felt, derived from emphasis on conformity with the group.

That belief, while still receiving substantial support, is strongly opposed by the rising emphasis on individuality, on personal autonomy, and on the transcendence of individual conscience over group or collective interests. Joseph Fletcher, in *Situation Ethics*,

endorses this premise: "Every man must decide for himself according to his own estimate of conditions and consequences; and no one can decide for him or impugn the decision to which he comes."<sup>7</sup> This is heady wine for many, young and old.

Amitai Etzioni notes that in periods of transition, several social philosophies contend for preeminence. The old core philosophy may be displaced by one of the contenders; the old one will not then disappear, but will remain influential as a subculture, although somewhat changed. Meanwhile, one of the contenders will move into the core status, but also be changed in the process. Etzioni describes today's waning central pattern as legitimating current economic patterns and institutions, such as ever-increasing productivity, and emphasizing concern for this world, as well as for austerity, rationality, discipline, and achievement.

Etzioni identifies four competing subcultures as contenders. Each contains implications for national planning, for security, and for other essential purposes.<sup>8</sup>

1. A *literati* subculture—a life-style of nonpurposive learning, with focus on self and avoidance of socially useful labor. Offering no justification for efforts on behalf of justice or any other social cause, it might provide a basis for a society with less competition, conflict, and tension.

2. An *empathetic* subculture—stressing the quality of positive relationships with others, on personal and small group levels, over interests of the larger society.

3. A *political-activist* subculture—emphasizing the primacy of public life, and such public goals as justice and education as the primary criteria for meaningful life-style.

4. A *hedonistic* subculture—endorsing natural inclinations with few prohibitions, and aiming to free mankind from norms, based on belief in the natural goodness of man.

Which subculture is likely to become the dominant one? Etzioni suggests that an amalgam of the *political-activist* and *empathetic* subcultures will emerge as the central core of the future.

## INDIVIDUALISTIC VS COLLECTIVE VALUES



There is nothing new, of course, in the existence of tension among contradictory values accepted within the same society. De Tocqueville pointed out a century and a half ago—and such diverse thinkers as Warner, Parrington, and Lipset have echoed the idea since—that the two supreme values in American culture are essentially antithetical: liberty (achievement) and equality. Still, we continue to endorse both values and to live with the inconsistencies.

Which will emerge in the dominant position—individual values or collective values? It is probable that we shall evolve some kind of compromise and continue to support both clusters of values but in some altered relationship.

Nevertheless, some predict the inevitable dominance of collective values in an increasingly complex society. Professor Jack Douglas insists that without society, man cannot exist or possibly fulfill himself.<sup>9</sup> Garrett Hardin offers an interesting aphorism suggesting a new definition of freedom: "Freedom is the recognition of necessity, and all must accept mutual coercion mutually agreed upon."<sup>10</sup> Others suggest that collective values will necessarily become so dominant that the individual will be considered abnormal if he fails to conform to group norms. If such a value structure is on the way, it appears to be still a long way off.

Meanwhile, national planners must cope with today and tomorrow amidst a context that intensifies internal dissidence. Obviously, highly organized societies are highly vulnerable. One is repeatedly impressed by the capability of some small group to immobilize large polities, such as the crippling of New York City by successive work stoppages by garbage collectors, elevator operators, taxi drivers, engravers, and bridge tenders. Political, legal, economic, social, ethnic, professional, and work groups have less and less hesitancy in adopting militancy as a technique to further their interests—one

manifestation of the diffusion of power that is taking place.

One should note the evolving role of professional organizations and societies. More and more professional associations are being established, formulating standards for professions and, to some extent, eroding the loyalty of their member professionals to work organizations.

One should also note some positive aspects of the role that organizations play in bureaucracies. Aaron Wildavsky has pointed to the Watergate affair and the relative success of representatives of well-established organizations—the CIA, the military services, the FBI—to resist corrupting overtures toward involvement in questionable activities. Along another line, Max Lerner points to the inconsistency of Watergate with the myth that locates the danger to American freedom in the "military-industrial complex." The American military clearly continues its traditional neutrality in partisan domestic politics.<sup>11</sup>

The security policymakers will probably find it more difficult to develop national compromise or consensus that supports one course of action or another. A number of trends in the general society compound this difficulty. One is the decline in acceptance of the Great Man syndrome; a better educated and more politically sophisticated citizenry is more aware of the warts and flaws of leaders, and is unwilling to accept the old assurances that "Papa knows best." John Stuart Mill once asked: "Was there ever any domination that did not appear natural to those who possessed it?"<sup>12</sup> but the familiar elites will be permitted less autonomy in running future societies or communities. More and more citizens are intolerant of social domination, and are increasingly successful in resisting, for example, manipulated information, or edicts handed down from on high without explanation.

In repeated samplings of public opinion, there is reported widespread lack of confidence in government.<sup>13</sup> It is not always clear whether this reflects declining confidence in the government or administration of the moment, or declining

confidence in the government in general. Moreover, the widening suspicion of, and resistance to, the use of "national security" to justify withholding of information and explanations appears to be spreading within the government itself, as well as throughout American society. In November 1973, the Watergate Special Prosecutor Leon Jaworski said: "In the recent past, national security has been invoked by officials at widely disparate levels of government service to justify a wide range of apparently illegal activities."<sup>14</sup> Even setting aside illegal actions, pressure mounts for fuller, more candid, and more cogent actions, undertaken under the rubric of "national security." For if one cannot learn anything about them, one cannot arrive at a judgment as to whether they are legal or not, let alone whether they are necessary or wise. The outcome will probably be that greater public accountability and more extensive explanation will be exacted of national planners.

There are fewer existing restraints to publication of private or public sensitive material. No federal libel law exists (and there has been none since the controversial Alien and Sedition Acts of 1798). Recent Supreme Court decisions have set very demanding requirements for public officials and figures to meet in order to defend themselves against libel. President Nixon termed the situation "virtually a license to lie about political leaders, inviting slanderous attacks on them or their families."<sup>15</sup>

The point here is that the public climate in which government policy is developed grants considerable latitude for misrepresentation and misstatement via exploiters of the media, often without needed correctives. This situation will be a fact of life for some time.

Even classified documents and discussions are no longer as untouchable as they used to be. The Pentagon Papers were stolen, reproduced, and published with the protection of the courts. Former trusted government specialists, having sworn never to reveal specific matters, publish books or testify in open hearings about intelligence procedures, the CIA, and sensitive inter-nation discussions. These are new and formidable encumbrances in the formulation

of security policy. Two related developments are instant "kiss-and-tell" revelations by departees from sensitive positions, and "whistle-blowing," the revelation by a member of any agency, public or private, of institutional practices which he personally questions. Greater access to public forums is now available for dissenting subordinates—through Congress, the media, and activist groups; and increasing numbers of subordinates have no inhibitions about exploiting such access for any of a variety of motives.

### PREVAILING WISDOM



A particularly difficult trend with which to cope is that of developments in the media, the press, and mass communications in general. The technical equipment has become so advanced

and so ubiquitous that we are becoming inundated with the spoken and printed word. Techniques of presenting public information resemble those of dramatic presentation, including selection, omission, slanting, and suspense. Competition becomes so intense at times that the most passionate adversary with the loudest bullhorn and the most offensive invective is the one who gets to tell the story. Access to the media, and skill in exploitation of them, become effective in building up pervasive climates of opinion. Regarding Vietnam for example, C. L. Sulzberger wrote a short time ago: "Vietnam has been for so long a codeword for disaster that most people lose all semblance of intellectual reasoning once they hear it."<sup>16</sup>

Gradually, certain myths arise and take hold; and from then on, those who subscribe to the other side must contest the myth, not reality. This is one of the most ambiguous challenges to future policymakers in the field of national security. For example, since the middle of the Vietnam War we have been assured in a steadily rising crescendo from revisionists that the United States acts in the fashion of imperialism, and actually started the Cold War.

The revisionist school is not exactly a



monolithic group, including as it does a gamut from serious, frequently healthy skeptics, to a handful of superficial and intolerant denouncers in several disciplines.

Some radical collections of cliches became the prevailing wisdom, the preferred rationale, for many, especially on the campuses and in the adversary press in the late 1960's. How much truth was in them? Any? A little? A lot? Actually, much myth was included, congenial to the double-standard perception of democracies and totalitarian regimes of the Right as corrupt and repressive, while totalitarian regimes of the Left are to be indulged as benign tyrannies.

This is not the place to debate the Cold War; but it is useful to emphasize the power of modern media to saturate, with rhetoric and partisan premises, our limited absorbing capacity. Even the 1971 White House Conference on Youth expressed one resolution in this way, the implications of which are self-evident for national planning:

We are concerned about the incredible strength of the media in all phases of our lives. We recognize the potential for danger that lies in this widespread penetration.<sup>17</sup>

Our failure to make sufficient early efforts to explain fully the issues and the options of the war in Vietnam to the American people seems, in retrospect, almost self-defeating. We assumed too much about the state of American opinion at the time, neglecting, for example, the advice of W. E. H. Lecky, who wrote a century ago that the success of any opinion depends "less upon the force of its arguments, or upon the ability of its advocates, than upon the predisposition of society to receive it."<sup>18</sup>

Some major arguments advanced in opposition to the Vietnam War were inaccurate and incredible, but in a number of respects it did not really matter what the real issues were, or the pros and cons about each; when the climate of national opinion hardened around opposition to the war, no supporting argument, however sound, was welcomed. Far greater efforts will be required

in the future to inform and explain the facts and the arguments which have persuaded national leaders toward a major course of action—certainly concerning such a course as entering a war.

### THE OPTION OF GRADUALISM



Earlier, General Marshall's conclusion was cited that a democracy will simply not fight a long war. This is probably a reliable conclusion, which leaders in America have had to learn over and over again.

One lesson for future military planners, accentuated by the Vietnam experience, is that a strategy of creeping gradualism in a future war will probably not be a viable choice.<sup>19</sup> If it is true that the American public will not support a long war, one of the essential constraints on American strategic decisionmakers will be to see to it, so far as it is within their ability to do so, that it will not be a long war.

### DUBIOUS SOLACE



We may extract some solace from the fact that we are by no means alone. Uncertainty, internal tension, and instability are not characteristics peculiar to the United States in current times, but are widespread around the world. Peculiarly, the discord seems most evident, despite high standards of living, in free democratic countries. Few, if any, national leaders are accorded worldwide approval and prestige—such as was granted to Churchill, De Gaulle, Eisenhower, even Nasser. There are few world heroes left. Government upheavals continue in France and Britain, without satisfactory resolution. Italy maintains a shaky government posture continuously, Sweden operates under a minority government. The Dutch and the Danes suffer weak cabinets, embroiled in conflict. Belgium goes on for months without

a government. Germany walks something of a tightrope, with less than expected results from its *Ostpolitik*.<sup>20</sup>

### THE ELUSIVE ETIOLOGY OF WAR



Highly articulate groups invariably arise in postwar democracies, with the conviction that war can be, or even soon will be, eliminated from human experience. Yet, we recall that in *Ecclesiastes*, it is said:

For everything there is a season and a time to  
every purpose under heaven—  
A time to be born and a time to die,  
A time to plant and a time to reap.  
... a time for war and a time for peace.

Few passages are as eloquent on the relentless repetition of the cycles of life.

Thomas Jefferson, no less, once wrote:

Wars then must sometimes be our lot; and  
all the wise can do, will be to avoid that  
half of them which would be produced  
by our own follies, and our own acts of  
injustice; and to make for the other half  
the best preparations we can.<sup>21</sup>

We need not pause here to explore the roots of war—whether war stems inexorably from aggressive instincts in man's psyche, from one or more of the seven deadly sins, from the contradictions inherent in capitalism or communism, from ideologies, from ignorance or miscalculation, from strength or from weakness. Most, if not all, of the familiar theories are at least partially unsatisfactory. If I may mention one that always seemed to me to be particularly unpersuasive, even in this age of advanced communications, it is the theory that, if peoples knew each other better and communicated more, wars would be avoided. This ignores the fact that most wars have been fought among neighbors; and the evidence on the personal level indicates that most murders occur between people well known to each

other, frequently members of the same families.

What does appear to be changing in the context of war, however, is the nature of whatever war may come, and the organization of the conduct of war. We appear to have learned from experience—or have we? Despite long acquaintance with the insights of Machiavelli and Clausewitz, we did not successfully mesh military and political objectives in World War II. Nevertheless, we learned very much during that war about the necessity for maintaining psychological cohesion on the home front; but when the Vietnam War approached, we neglected to explain the war persuasively enough, and *early* enough, to our own people.

Through World War I (and to some lesser extent, through World War II) we adhered to the principle that when war comes, its direction is largely turned over to the military. In the past two decades, this situation has been reversed. By the time of the Vietnam War, technological advances in communications, as well as political and other factors, had made it feasible, and in the Administration's view desirable, to apply a host of limitations and restraints on military operations—even for the White House to pass on the suitability of the next day's specific targets. It is not likely that this trend will be reversed. Extensive communication facilities now exist for close control of our armed forces, and they are sure to be used by any wartime political leadership. Thus, while some aspects of power are being diffused, others are being centralized.

Louis Halle, pondering the future of war, suggests that the time of duly declared, openly contested, great formal wars has gone forever, especially great wars involving great powers on both sides.<sup>22</sup> However, he foresees the continuous eruption of violence on lesser scales—interventions, clandestine conflicts, guerrilla wars—which appear to be more difficult for democracies to cope with.

A host of important developments in progress are related to the domestic context of military affairs—too many to be cited here, including many affecting the search for the proper postwar roles for the military

establishment. Alfred de Vigny provides a passage that may be somewhat overstated:

When a modern army ceases to be at war, it becomes a kind of constabulary. It . . . knows neither what it is nor what it is supposed to do, . . . It is a body searching high and low for its soul and unable to find it.<sup>23</sup>

There is, unquestionably, a military role to be found; but its ethos, its terms, its rationales, and its civil-military equations are particularly difficult to identify in the seething peacetime context of current postwar American society. It appears to be particularly challenging for the armed forces to evolve modern conditions of service that make sense not only to the military but also to young entrants pre-indoctrinated by an ambivalent, indulgent society; and, after obtaining their share of qualified manpower, to use it efficiently thus eluding the connotation of stockpiling large numbers of talented people over a long period and avoiding what Morris Janowitz calls the "chronic underemployment" of peacetime military service.<sup>24</sup> And the strongest pressures concerning these challenging aspects will come not only from changing social and cultural perspectives, but also from the hard realities of competition for talented manpower in an increasingly complex and specialized society.

#### SMOKE IN THE POWERHOUSE



How accurate are our current perceptions of other nations—and for that matter, of ourselves?

Within our own borders, the elusive nature of national interest even in domestic terms; the erosion of consensus; the conflict among special interests and militant veto groups; the limited tolerance of Americans for sustained emergencies; the proliferation and splintering of knowledge; the complexity of coordination within government; the fundamental tension

between increased autonomy for the individual and imperatives for emphasis on group values; the generalist-specialist tug-of-war; declining confidence in government and rising suspicion of the rationale of "national security;" ambiguous expansion in the role and power of the media; the perennial unpredictability of the nature of future war—all these facets of change compound the challenge to national security planners.

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**. . . FOR NATIONAL SECURITY PLANNERS THE HEAT IN THE KITCHEN WILL BECOME MORE INTENSE, THE GOLDFISH BOWL WILL BECOME LESS OPAQUE, AND THERE ARE LIKELY TO BE MORE LIONS IN THE ARENA.**

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Thus, to summarize what's happening to this process, we might employ several upgraded clichés to the effect that for national security planners the heat in the kitchen will become more intense, the goldfish bowl will become less opaque, and there are likely to be more lions in the arena.

We have merely scratched the surface here. Some of these changes will prove to be fads and wither away. Some will prove to be cyclic, and wax and wane from time to time. But some will prove to be inexorable and irresistible. The crucial question is, which are which?

In April 1972, the University of Texas sponsored an international symposium, assembling the most eminent thinkers on the theme: "Problems of the 21st Century." After three days of the most lively and provocative discussion, the distinguished British anthropologist, H. Max Gluckman, was asked to sum up. He tried, then threw up his hands and said, "I can't do it—it's really impossible!" He proposed a toast to the Queen instead.<sup>25</sup>

Perhaps we should toast those men and

women of the future who will rise to the occasion and develop appropriate security policies for the United States, as well as those who will risk their lives in whatever dangerous enterprises American society calls upon them to endure.

## NOTES

1. Samuel P. Huntington, *The Soldier and the State*, (Cambridge, Mass: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1957), p. 346.

2. William Safire, "Each Other's Mail," *The New York Times*, May 9, 1974, p. 43. Also cited in *Harper's Magazine*, October 1973, p. 115.

3. Huntington, p. 144.

4. General Marshall's exact words were "a democracy cannot fight a Seven Years' War." Interview, July 24, 1949. Quoted by Maurice Matloff, *Strategic Planning for Coalition Warfare: 1943-1944*. In series, United States Army in World War II, Office of Chief, Military History, Department of the Army. (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 1959), p. 5.

5. Daniel Bell, *The Coming of Post-Industrial Society*, (New York: Basic Books, 1973). See also Bell, "The End of Scarcity," *Saturday Review/Society*, May 1973, pp. 49-52.

6. "As We See It," *TV Guide*, October 13, 1973, p. 5.

7. Kenneth Kirk, *Conscience and Its Problems*, (London: Longmans-Green, 1972), pp. 375-76.

8. Amitai Etzioni, "The Search for Political Meaning," *Center Magazine*, March-April 1972, pp. 2-8.

9. Jack D. Douglas, *Deviance and Respectability: The Social Construction of Moral Meanings*, (New York: Basic Books, 1970).

10. Garrett Hardin, "The Tragedy of the Commons," *Science*, December 13, 1968, pp. 1243-48.

11. Max Lerner, "America Agonistes," *Foreign Affairs*, January 1974, p. 294.

12. John Stuart Mill, *The Subjection of Women*, London, 1965. (Paperback edition, New York: Fawcett, 1971), p. 27.

13. See, for example, Louis Harris, *The Anguish of Change*, (New York: W. W. Norton, 1973); and Anthony Lewis, "Winter of Discontent," *The New York Times*, April 15, 1974, p. 31.

14. "National Security Claim Hit," *The Washington Post*, November 13, 1973, p. 1.

15. "Shorter Campaigns Proposed by Nixon: Libel Changes," *The Washington Post*, March 9, 1974, p. 1.

16. C. L. Sulzberger, "The Kissinger Phenomenon," *The New York Times*, March 24, 1974, p. 17.

17. Resolution 10, 3f, *Report of the White House Conference on Youth*, (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 1971), p. 242.

18. W. E. H. Lecky, *History of the Rise and Influence of the Spirit of Rationalism in Europe*, (London: Longmans-Green, 1866), Vol. I, p. vi.

19. The lesson indicated involves relative scales and paces of gradualism. All rational application of military force is, or ought to be, gradual in some sense. Otherwise, we should expect all-out thermonuclear exchange in the first moments of any future war. Nevertheless, setting aside for the moment questions of coping with proliferating restraints in modern war, the Vietnam War illustrates persuasively the futility of applying force in long, drawn-out escalatory steps which represent slight intensification. A resourceful enemy is thus provided with enough time to readjust and match each step, nullifying the other side's potential but unused strength, however preponderant it appears to be. The familiar "principle of war", mass, is relevant here: the massing of overwhelming (not merely slightly superior) strength at decisive points in time and space.

20. See, for example, "The Malaise of Democracies," *The Washington Post*, March 5, 1974, p. A22.

21. Notes on the State of Virginia, cited by Bernard Brodie, *Politics and War*, (New York: Macmillan, 1973), p. 29.

22. Louis J. Halle, "Does War Have a Future?" *Foreign Affairs*, October 1973, pp. 33-34.

23. Quoted by William L. Hauser, Lieutenant Colonel, US Army, *America's Army in Crisis*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973), p. 1.

24. Morris Janowitz, "National Service: A Third Alternative?" *Columbia University Teachers College Record*, Vol. 73, No. 1. September 1971, p. 51.

25. Robert Reinhold, "Problems of the 21st Century Confound a Parley of Thinkers," *The New York Times*, April 10, 1972.